

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

**Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 74, as follows:**

As a result of ~~researches~~ research carried out repeatedly to attain the foregoing object, the present inventors discovered that when a portion smaller in basis weight was provided in the exhaust-gas-inlet-side end surface of a holding material, the wind erosion effect of exhaust gas could be reduced while a catalyst carrier could be held by the other portion in the same manner as in the conventional art. Thus, the invention was completed.

**Please amend the heading at page 4, line 94, as follows:**

**BRIEF ~~DESCRIPTION~~ DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 146, as follows:**

Alternatively, the low basis weight area A may be formed so that the basis weight is the smallest in the exhaust-gas-inlet-side end portion 3a and increases continuously toward the high basis weight area B as shown with varied dot density in Fig. 1. In this case, the average basis weight of the low basis weight area A is regarded as the basis weight of the low basis weight area A and selected to be in the aforementioned range.